



What is Training Your Dog?

By Arnold Hartley

Courtesy of the *Ranch Dog Trainer*, October/November 1997

Everybody knows what training you dog means. Pondering that question, I thought what does training really entail? Widening the dogs outrun, teaching a more proper balance, getting a better stop when you need it, yes this is training. But does it go much deeper in your relationship with your dog then just working stock? I think so.

I believe - no- I am certain, that everything you do with your dog for the entire time it is in your possession is training. that is whether you are in company with your dog or it is in its kennel or confinement area, away from you, alone, or with other animals.

I can not train my dog when I am not with it you say — WRONG.

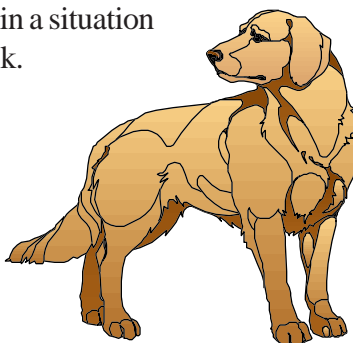
Every situation your dog encounters, whether under strict supervision or confinement or running alone on the street is a learning experience for the dog. Any learning experience is a training experience. The situation the dog is exposed to, is training him. And remember this, no two beings ever perceive a given event in exactly the same light, not do they react exactly the same. Therefore each individual's training experience will differ somewhat from any others in what appears to be identical situations. Do not expect your dog to react or be disappointed if your dog does not react the same as another, in a given situation.

The dog owner, handler, trainer is responsible for the dog when it is in their possession or control no matter what its age or condition. In may mind there are two types of training, active and passive. This dissertation is concerned with passive training. That is putting the dog in a situation and leaving it alone.

Dogs are smart, thinking beings and are by nature active and inquisitive. If left to their own devices they will find something to do.

if a dog is confined in an area exposing it to stock on a continuing basis the dog will likely start lying down and watching the stock for hours on end. When the dog is taken to the stock, it lies down and stares at the stock and does not move. you have a sticking dog and can not understand why. It has been trained to stick by putting it in a situation and leaving it alone where it is allowed to stick.

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Your Dog's Food Read and Understand the Labels

By Lisa R. Davis, J.D.

Courtesy of the *Ranch Dog Trainer*, October/November 1997

Most of the information that you need to determine the quality of the food that you are feeding your dog can be found on the product package; however, even after reading the label it is not always easy to tell what you are getting. Reading and understanding the food manufacturers list of ingredients is a vital necessity when selecting a dog food. The following basic information is provided to assist you in selecting a dog food by briefly explaining labeling and defining commonly used ingredients.

Labeling laws require manufacturers to list ingredients in descending order of weight before the food is cooked or preprocessed. The ingredient weighing the most (prior to cooking) is listed first; the second heaviest ingredient is listed second, and so on. For example, if the first ingredient list is corn, then there is more corn (by weight prior to cooking) in the food than anything else. However, interpreting an ingredient listing can be tricky when a particular ingredient contains mostly water which will evaporate during cooking or processing. Typically, the combination of the first four to five ingredients listed on the package will equal 75% of the food (by weight prior to cooking) and are an extremely accurate indicator of the quality of a particular food.

With an understanding of how to read an ingredients label, you can now begin to understand the actual meaning of some of the most common dog food ingredient listing, which are: Lamb/Chicken Meat; Lamb/Chicken Meal; By-Products; Digest; Grains, Vegetables, and Fillers. (Note: The topic of Vitamins and Minerals and the topic of preservatives will be addressed in two future articles.)

Meat and Meal

What is the difference between the ingredient listing Meat and ingredient listing Meal? The principle component of chicken meat is water. By weight, a chicken is 70 - 75% water. So actually, when you see "Chicken" or "Lamb" on the top of an ingredient list, it means the water weight in the raw (wet) meat is what qualified it to be first. After the cooking process, where up to 75% of the chicken evaporates, the actual chicken content is reduced to being the fourth or fifth ingredient in your dog's food. So for every five pounds of raw (wet) meat used in some brands of dog food, as little as one pound may end up in the finished product. This occurs because 75% of a raw (wet) chicken is water, which evaporates during the cooking process.

On the other hand, meal is fresh meat, with the water and fat already removed. It takes five pounds of fresh chicken meat to make one pound of meal. So when you see chicken meal or lamb meal listed as the first ingredient on a dog food label, the chicken or lamb is really in the bag where it counts as a superior food source for your dog.

Be suspicious of the generic Meat Meal ingredient listing, as the type of meat is unidentified. This mystery meat can contain cattle, swine, sheep, and/or goats. Often times when this meat meal is used in dog food, it is because it has been labeled and sold to the dog food manufacturer as inexpensive 4-D meat. In the meat packing industry, 4-D means the animal was diseased, disabled, dying or dead upon its arrival at slaughter. In other words, it is unfit for human consumption so it is sold to dog food manufacturers and used in lower quality dog foods.

By-Products

What are 'by-products'? By-products are, as the name suggests, the left overs from human food production. Having been condemned as unfit for human consumption, these non-rendered parts are very inexpensive. The two most common by-products used in dog food are: Chicken or poultry By-Products, which are defined as a mix of chicken or poultry parts such as heads, necks and guts that can contain bones, feathers, beaks and feet; and Meat By-Product, which are defined as non-rendered parts OTHER THAN MEAT, derived from slaughter animals such as lungs, spleen, kidneys and other guts.

Digest

What is poultry/chicken digest? As the name suggests, digest is a type of by-product. It is produced by the process of subjecting poultry or chicken parts containing animal digest to prolonged heat and moisture, or to chemical enzymes with a resultant change of decomposition of the physical or chemical nature of the parts. Basically, you start with no nutritional value and further devalue that.

Grains, Vegetables and Fillers

Dogs are carnivores (meat eaters) and have digestive systems designed to process MEAT proteins. They have mouths with sharp teeth designed for tearing meat and short digestive tracts ideal for digesting meat. Some grains and vegetables like corn and soy are much more difficult for carnivores to digest, they are commonly used in dog food. These ingredients are much less expensive for the food manufacturer to purchase.

A more expensive ingredient combination such as rice and wheat is easier to digest than corn or soy, thus giving your dog a more nutritious and more easily digested food. A rice and wheat combination is one of the most nutritionally balanced grain combinations and provides better nutrition than ordinary single grain foods. Be aware of the ingredient listing Brewers Rice, rather than simply rice. When used in commercial dog foods, Brewer's Rice is the dried, extracted residue of rice resulting from the manufacture of wort or beer. Likewise, when used in commercial dog foods, Corn Gluten is the dried residue of corn resulting from the manufacture of corn starch or corn syrup. These forms of Brewers Rice and Corn Gluten are unfit for human consumption and are purchased by dog food manufacturers as inexpensive fillers.

Your carnivore requires a diet consisting primarily of meat protein and grains to build and repair tissues and to maintain its short and long term good health. Many commercial foods for carnivores contain very little if any MEAT protein and can contain fillers such as peanut hulls, rice hulls, brewers rice and corn gluten. Commonly found in dog foods in varying amounts are soybeans and corn, which are incidentally the number one and two allergens of dogs.

Check the first four to five ingredients on your dog's food label, and determine whether or not your dog's diet is digestible meat proteins, or if it contains primarily non-digestible grains, vegetables, and by-products. Being armed with valid information will enable dog owners to look past fancy packaging and advertising and get to the real issue; i.e., what is the nutritional value of the food actually inside the bag. If you do not understand information contained on the food label, call the manufacturer and consult your veterinarian. **ASK QUESTIONS!**

(After much research of the dog food topic, I am now feeding my own crew of working Border Collies a food called Flint River Ranch. It is manufactured in California and shipped anywhere in the continental U.S. This food contains as its first four listed ingredients the following; Chicken Meal, Whole Wheat Flour, Ground Rice and Lamb Meal, and is unsurpassed in its nutritional value. This food contains no potentially harmful chemical preservatives such as Ethoxyquin, BHA, BHT, and it contains no by-products, cheap fillers, artificial flavors or color. Guaranteed Analysis of Crude Protein 23.0%, Crude Fat 12.0%, and Crude Fiber 4.0%.

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Allowing a dog to put its feet on people, or jump up on you, teaches him that he can and he will do it at the most inopportune time. Allowing a dog to bark continually in its kennel will teach it that it can, and it will. Keeping dogs close together and not spending enough time with them teaches them to become dog oriented and they will pay humans little or no attention.

A while back we were offered a free, nice looking adult Border Collie, that had mostly been left alone with two other dogs inside and invisible fence. I was told the dogs had killed a couple of dogs that strayed into their territory and would bite people. The owners had to move the dogs for this reason.

Cathy and I must have sucker tattooed on our foreheads. We took the dog. We discussed the situation and Cathy suggested solitary confinement as a training method. We tied the dog in a horse trailer and left him there for two months. At first we fed and watered him and cleaned up any mess. We did not acknowledge his presence nor did he ours. Time passed. We started calling him Whitey. Whitey started to bark occasionally and howled some. We ignored him. One day I opened the escape door to feed him and Whitey stuck his head out wanting to talk. Things improved rapidly after that and he eventually became a good cowdog.

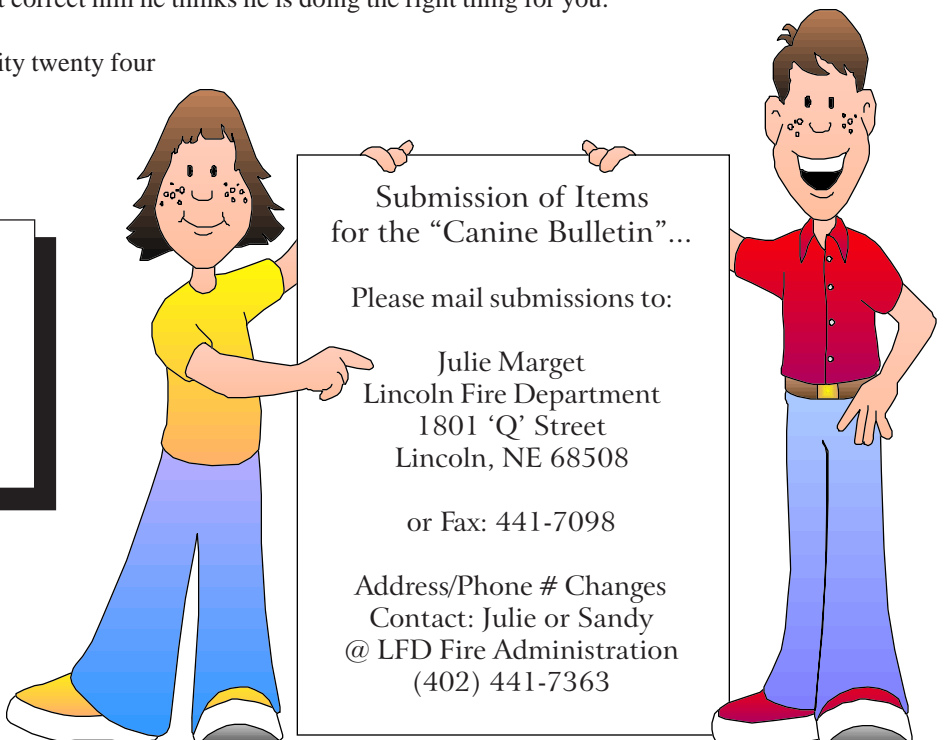
Whitey's owners taught him to be independent of all humans, by placing him in a situation and leaving him alone. We taught him that he must depend on and respond to us for everything, food, water, companionship, his existence. We did not ever deny this dog adequate food, water, or shelter, and never struck him. Whitey is a healthy, intelligent dog, with emotions and needs, particularly the pack instinct, a need to belong. We used that against him and won him over. He had the choice of remaining alone in the trailer or bonding with us. We put him in a training situation and left him alone. You can train your dog, play with him, and let him have fun. You do not have to keep the screws on him all the time - but be careful of the situations you leave him in.

My good friend Alex Harriett was talking to me about his beloved Moss and said "You better not let Moss make the same mistake twice or he will do it from then on. If you do not correct him he thinks he is doing the right thing for you."

Make them or break them. It is your responsibility twenty four hours a day.

Training Logs Submission Address

Mail or Drop Off Logs to:
Sandy Yost
Lincoln Fire Department
1801 'Q' Street
Lincoln, NE 68508



Submission of Items
for the "Canine Bulletin"...

Please mail submissions to:

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